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material useful for purposes of reference; no doubt such an index will complete the series.

Regardless of the merits or demerits of the excursions of the editors, this work has great value; for it gives the texts of Schwenckfeld's works, and in so far as is a source-book. These texts are reproductions of the originals as far as this is possible in printing, and are on the whole satisfactorily edited. They give the work its value for scholars and make it a real contribution to the literature of the Reformation.

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### PRIMITIVE LUTHERAN ETHICAL THEORY

It may be premature to say that we are about to witness in the near future a revival of interest in the ethical side of the Reformation of the sixteenth century. If, however, the two treatises which have just been issued by the firm of Trowitzsch & Sohn, in Berlin, betoken anything, they certainly show such a turn of specialistic historical investigation, at least on the part of young and aggressive scholars. The first of these<sup>1</sup> takes up what in the order of development historically came later, and aims to expound the early Lutheran theory of ethics as presented in the writings of Johann Gerhard. It is an effort at a more thorough and sympathetic understanding of the ethical aspect of the German Reformation movement than has hitherto been attained. The author, a young and clear-minded theologian, Renatus Hupfeld, believes that this end can be reached best through a minute and exhaustive study of one of the typical developments of the movement. His greatest difficulty he evidently finds in the task of disentangling purely ethical from dogmatic theological notions. Yet in order to understand the ethical ideas of Gerhard he finds it necessary to take account of the theological ground upon which they have taken root. The exact nature, for instance, of virtue in human conduct must be looked at as based upon the Reformation doctrines of original sin and regenerating grace. In consequence of the corruption of human nature resulting from Adam's fall, concupiscence rules the human heart in such a way that no man can do good freely. The human soul has indeed the power to do outwardly right deeds, but its activity in them merely serves as a means of rounding out man's part in the world of nature. It is to be viewed as a function of humanity devoid of moral character in the strict sense of the

<sup>1</sup> *Die Ethik Johann Gerhards*. Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis der lutherischen Ethik. Von Renatus Hupfeld, Lic. Theol. Berlin: Trowitzsch & Sohn, 1908. vii+261 pages. M. 6.80.

word. In itself it is neither good nor bad. It can only have ethical significance when preceded and conditioned by regeneration of heart. Otherwise spiritually it falls under the category of sin.

How then does man attain to spiritual merit? The question is answered by a reiteration of the two characteristic thoughts of the Reformation interpretation of the gospel. First, man obtains the possibility of spiritual merit by the upspringing in his heart of faith as a consequence of repentance. This means that he reaches the certain assurance of salvation independently of the perfection of his own work, and through grace alone. Secondly, faith displays itself by its own necessity in a new obedience. It awakens new spiritual affections and creates a new attitude toward God and the world. It thus makes possible a spontaneous conformity to God's law; for it bears within itself the principle of filial relationship to God—a humble, childlike, and grateful acknowledgment of obligation. In this way righteousness, first as a spiritual and then as an ethical development and principle, becomes operative. The concrete manifestation of this new obedience then takes the negative, but not empty, form of a struggle against sin, and the positive one of an outflow of love toward God and toward one's neighbor. From the latter issues normal Christian character and conduct.

It is an interesting but scarcely illuminative exposition of the ethical theory of Lutheranism. It does not fulfil the promise of disentangling the ethical from the theological element in the system. It raises the question whether such disentanglement can ever be accomplished, and whether if accomplished it promises to yield any valuable assistance toward the perfection of ethical theory for the present day. If it cannot do this, it must necessarily remain a matter of purely historical interest and importance. The point of view of present-day ethical theory is determined so much by the emphasis laid on the sociological aspects of ethics, and these were so completely ignored by the individualism of the Reformation theology that it seems too much to expect any practical bearings from a study of that theology on scientific ethics.

The kindred topic of the meaning of concupiscence in Luther's life and teaching is treated by Lic. Wilhelm Braun<sup>2</sup> with the same desire of laying before an age of a different spirit and different ideals the great Reformer's attitude toward the most vital of the ethical questions of his day. On the one side, Luther's conception is realized to be fundamentally the outgrowth of his theological system, and, to that extent, to lie somewhat to one side of the ethical sphere pure and simple as included in the modern view of

<sup>2</sup> *Die Bedeutung der Concupiscenz in Luthers Leben u. Lehre.* Von Wilhelm Braun, Lic. Theol. Berlin: Trowitzsch & Sohn, 1908. vii + 312 pages. M. 6.

the world. On the other side, it is shown to stand in contrast with that of the teachers of the church who preceded Luther, both scholastics and early Fathers. These held, from the days of Augustine onward, that, with admission into the church through baptism, original sin was obliterated. Concupiscence therefore could not be sin, since it remains after baptism as before. Its movements within must be the result of physical conditions and causes and betoken the need of the physician's attention and art rather than the care of the curator of souls. It was otherwise with Luther. Such a treatment appeared to him to be calling things by other than their true names. Since an impulse toward sin is contained in and becomes manifest through concupiscence it must be sinful. Yet its sinfulness was not allowed to stand in the way of the individual's salvation. It was annulled by an act of grace on God's part. Thus Luther saved the day for sound ethical theory. He did so, however, not by a psychological and metaphysical analysis of conceptions and attributes of human nature, nor by the method of speculative philosophy, but by the force of a vital religious consciousness which revealed to him within himself nothing but sin, and presented to his mind's eye all ethical health, all virtue, all good as a working of God's spirit out of pure and free unconditioned compassion. This result, though not in itself a system of ethics, nor even the germinal beginning of it, opens the way for the building of an untrammelled ethical philosophy and, to that extent, it is positive gain.

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#### SOME RECENT DISCUSSIONS OF MODERNISM

The remarkable literature now proceeding from the modernists who persist in remaining within the Roman Catholic church may be considered as falling into two groups. The one regards the change and reformation which the church must undergo as merely a matter of discipline, such as relaxing the present Italian centralization, reforming the Roman congregations, and adopting a more tolerant attitude toward modern scholarship and democracy. The other drives the knife deeper. It maintains that critical studies have brought about a hopeless bankruptcy of the traditional scheme of Catholic dogma, and that consequently Catholicism can continue to live among educated men only on condition that it revise and restate many of the articles of its ancient creed. The men who hold this radical view, however, believe, and with passionate earnestness at times declare, that Catholicism possesses an incomparable spiritual vitality and value,